

# Hermes

BY THE STUDENTS OF WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY IN MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT

Volume 6, Number 5

How can we be involved in our own education? Here, we take a critical view.



Photo Courtesy of Wesleyan's Office of Public Information

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# Solar House Sheds Light

by Eileen Mendel

Had we bothered to glance upwards sooner, we would have realized the potential that that great fusion generator 93 megamiles away offers. Electromagnetic radiation, the very solar rays that support life processes through the food chain and now indirectly provides us with fossil fuels (coal and petroleum) — the compressed vegetation in which solar rays were stored millions of years ago — has been and still remains an ultimate source of energy here on earth. All this time that we've been depleting our supply of oil and natural gas, which are important sources of raw materials for plastics, drugs, and other chemicals, we could have had both an economical and environmentally safe energy source in infinite and steady supply.

Today, over 40% of our oil is imported and we continue to pay higher and higher prices for it. Further, our natural gas supply is limited, and nuclear power and coal present tremendous threats to our environment. Forced to turn towards new sources of energy, some of our current research is aimed at harnessing the wind, the tides, and even the earth's internal heat as energy sources.

Solar technologies hold the greatest promise — if not to be used now to heat homes and buildings, but to buy time so that we may perfect our use of this source and develop the others while our present fuels continue to run low. It is not that distant in the future when it will be feasible to use solar energy to generate electricity either by steam generators or directly by photovoltaic "solar cells."

Two years ago, Paula Weiss, now a senior, spoke with professor of Physics,

Dr. William Trousdale, with the notion of learning more about solar energy and building a solar house for students to live in modeled after "The Site," a solar house built by students at New Paltz University in New York State over three years ago. A class on solar housing began in January 1976, attracting students with a variety of academic backgrounds, and few with substantial knowledge of physical concepts. Last fall, the class was continued and included four students of the ten from the January class. It was during the third semester of the solar housing course, last spring, that a subcommittee was organized to draw up an engineering design for a solar house.

Enthusiasm mounted and foundation money was sought for constructing a solar house. Letters sent to over twenty foundations became a fruitless effort as plans were insufficient and not clear-cut enough to receive money.

Meanwhile, Frank Blackford, a former CSIS professor presently employed with Elmcree Community Mental Health Center, and Vivien Blackford, who graduated from Wesleyan in '77 and currently works at the Human Service and Resource Center — became interested in the solar project through their long-time friend Bill Trousdale. Says Vivien, "at the time we were actively looking for a house to move into and the opportunity presented itself." After a local engineering firm approved the design for a house at a cost of \$500 and reached a verbal agreement with the Blackfords, the project was underway. The Blackfords then acquired a \$50,000 mortgage from City Savings Banks, whose Middletown office itself operates on solar energy.

Beginning in the last week of May, a



Photo: Prescott Bergh

A view of the Solar House in Portland, showing collector.

site in Portland was bought and cleared for construction. Students, from the class and volunteers worked on the project this summer. Scholarships of \$800 per student and \$1000 per student on financial aid were received in return for putting in 50 hours per week on the site with one week of vacation. In all, a total of \$2,800 in Ryder Scholarships and \$700 from the Kenan Fund were awarded by the University in support of the project. This fall eleven students and several volunteers are working on the project, which is now 83% complete and expected to be finished in January.

There are three ways in which one can construct a solar home. A solar home may be contracted by a professional builder, one can purchase a do-it-yourself kit for prefabricated solar supplies and construct the house on one's own, or standard construction materials can be put together and crafted into a solar system. The Wesleyan team used the last method. Materials were supplied by local firms and custom fit to the house. For example, the solar collectors had their start as sheets of aluminum which the students cut to size and corrugated by hand at the building site. The sheets were then painted black and placed on the southern roof. By using such a method supply, shipping, and storage costs were minimized and there was greater flexibility in the design.

More significantly, the entire house, from the foundation to the electrical wiring to the plumbing (with the exception of the septic system and water pump) was completely constructed by students. With the counselling of local firms and suggestions from Wesleyan's physical plant, the students proved that

it is possible to build a house with low technology using semi-skilled but mechanically adept labor.

Recently, Congress has passed a new energy bill which is soon to be signed into law by Carter. Up to a maximum of \$300 or 75 % of energy-saving equipment cost will be deductible from taxes retroactive to April 1977. Equipment eligible for credit, as listed by the Energy Department, will include weather-stripping, insulation, caulking, automatic furnace lighters, and clock thermostats. Investment in equipment for solar or wind as energy sources for heat or hot water will be credited for the first \$200 spent and 25 % of the next \$8000, or a maximum deduction of \$2200. Legislation is designed to promote utility-consumer cooperation.

Utility companies, if the customer requests, must provide information on energy-saving devices, both efficiency savings and costs; lists of individuals who can install such equipment; and institutions who will lend money to pay for them. Based on specific qualifications, those who fall into the range of a lower income class will be eligible for Federal grants on storm windows, insulation, and other heat conserving supplies up to \$88 per occupancy.

Congress expects to spend up to \$200 million in 1979 and 1980 to achieve its energy-saving goals. Five billion dollars in loans will be available to middle-income families through the federally implemented Government National Mortgage Association for the purchase of heat-saving equipment. The agency will reimburse the lending organization for loans less than \$2500 at a lower than

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Photo: Prescott Bergh

Students work cooperatively in building the house.

## Why No Peace In Palestine?

By Salih Abdul-Rahim

Again an enormous amount of time and energy has been futilely spent in an effort to achieve a lasting peace in the Middle East. The Camp David summit was a failure not because prospects for peace are non-existent but because, as Kareem Khalaf, mayor of Ramallah on the occupied West Bank, stated in his press conference on Sept. 20, 1978, in Washington D.C., "They (the Camp David participants) shied away from the Palestinian problem in its trinity: the people, the land and the leadership." At Camp David, an Egyptian, a Polish born Israeli, and an American attempted to decide the political destiny of the Palestinian people without the presence of a Palestinian official. This is perhaps the most disturbing fact about the talks. The agreement reached at Camp David reflects the absence of a realistic focus on the problem in the Middle East. It is a separate treaty between Egypt and Israel, based on a withdrawal of Israeli settlements from the Sinai. The second proposed agreement, which is attempting to deal with the future of the West Bank and Gaza, outlines a process whereby the following would take place:

1) a withdrawal of Israel's military forces from the West Bank in unspecified numbers.

2) unspecified numbers of military would remain within the West Bank.

3) upon the election of an "Administrative Council" of the West Bank and Gaza, the Israeli military government and its civilian administration will be withdrawn.

This plan contains no freeze on the expansion of Israeli West Bank settlements, nor a framework for the dismantling of existing settlements in that area. It also makes not even reference to the concept of self-determination for the Palestinian people. But it does provide for Israel to have a veto power over the following:

1) the nature of the self-governing authority to be established on the West Bank and Gaza.

2) which refugees displaced by the 1967 war can return to the West Bank and Gaza.

3) any Palestinian decision establishing an independent Palestinian State.

The Camp David accords are of course not binding in any way on the Palestinians, but they will have an impact on their struggle for National Liberation. As Senator James Abourezk of South Dakota pointed out in his speech from the floor of the U.S. Senate on September 19, 1978:



"This action not only denies the right of self-determination to the Palestinians, but its result can only be large-scale disruption throughout the Arab world. Without Egypt, the military balance will be tipped overwhelmingly in favor of Israel. Too weak militarily to threaten, or even to negotiate on an equal basis, the remaining members of the Arab bloc will, in all probability, suffer deep divisions amongst themselves. Radicalism, and all that comes with it, will be greatly encouraged, since it is the only real alternative left to people who have been denied a normal political outlet. The upheavals will reverberate throughout the Middle East, and the cost in human suffering in that part of the world simply to raise President Carter's popularity rating here at home will not, I think, be worth it."

On September 26, 1978, President Carter, referring

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# Letters to the Editors



## A Gaze Mid-eastward

To the Editor:

Finally! For the first time in several years *Hermes* has turned its critical gaze mid-eastward. Tamar Fischer's article on Zionism, though largely historical, touches on a current issue which is rarely discussed at Wesleyan.

I find it amazing that on a campus with so much political energy, so little is said or done about the middle-east, about Soviet Jewry, or about the American Nazi party. Just as South Africa concerned more than just Blacks, so do these issues concern more than just Jews.

But I find the silence of the Jewish Community itself even more puzzling. Is it due simply to ignorance of these issues?, or is this apathy symptomatic of alienation from Judaism? Since I myself have been part of this silent majority, I question not accusingly, but out of genuine wonder. After all, this may not be Brandeis, but it's certainly not Holy Cross either.

Tamar Fischer has broken the silence, at least temporarily. I hope that others will follow.

Alan Jacobs '80

## What's the Ideology?

To the Editors:

I am writing to express my disappointment with your recent editorial entitled "A Tale of One Paper." The question of what the *Hermes* represents is certainly an important one, but your explanation did not clarify anything.

At the beginning of the article it is stated "we are identified with a specific ideology: political progressivism." Political progressivism is not a specific ideology, but rather a euphemism vaguely associated with certain causes. In reality, what is progressive for one person is regressive to another; it is a relative term.

In the last paragraph of the editorial you claim that your convictions "predominantly concern the necessity for the individual to take responsibility for his or her own life — to formulate a response to what is happening in the world and to increase personal awareness and consciousness." These

## Hermes

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are noble words, but it happens that I have taken responsibility for my life and confronted what is going on, and yet have none of the strong "convictions" the *Hermes* has. To assume that being Anti-Nuke, Anti-Administration, Pro-SAAG and Pro-Strike is the natural result of increased personal awareness is quite presumptuous. Yet these are the things that it seems the *Hermes* stands for.

I believe the *Hermes* does have an ideology, but the editorial failed to define it. I am interested in newspaper writing, and I really would like to know what the *Hermes* represents.

Jonathan Weber '82

## Too Few Assumptions

To the Editors:

Three statements in Ellen Blau's article in *Hermes* (Science Education: Too Many Assumptions, November 9) deserve immediate comment:

1. "If everyone scores high, the median is high, and my letter grade is lower than if everyone does poorly." I quite frankly do not believe that Ms. Blau (or any other student) has ever received a semester letter grade in this department that is lower than what would be dictated by a strict application of her semester average. On the other hand, many students in courses at all levels have received higher letter grades than their averages would allow if the class as a whole has done poorly. If Ms. Blau gives me evidence that her performance has, in fact, been downgraded in any biology course because of a high class average, I will be happy to take up the matter in her behalf within the department. I only wish that I had a better understanding of why so many students insist on believing and perpetuating such myths, and let themselves be inflamed by them.

Biology at Wesleyan meant molecular biology and genetics." Until 1971 the department offered courses mainly in cell biology, genetics, development and molecular biology. Since that time, it has created a second area of expertise in neuro-physiology, behaviour and comparative physiology by making three faculty appointments (myself and the two Lynches). All three of us have been strongly encouraging the department and the University to improve offerings in these currently underrepresented areas with an additional faculty position, and we now have departmental support in this regard. Please don't assert us out of existence.

Despite the current imbalance within the department, three of the nine 200 level electives offered by the department this year (four of ten if labs are included) are in the newer areas listed above, and several others can be considered "molecular biology and genetics" only by stretching definitions of those terms well beyond their commonly accepted limits. In addition, Ms. Blau could have enrolled this semester in a small graduate seminar in physiological ecology for which she was exceptionally well prepared. I understand that despite these opportunities Ms. Blau has elected to take biochemistry this semester.

3. "I'm tired of the standard biased assumption around here that biology should be taught as a technical, experimental field, and not as the academic discipline it is." Some definitions are appropriate (all from Webster's or Random House). TECHNICAL: "having special knowledge, usually practical, of a mechanical or scientific subject;" "meaningful or of interest to persons of specialized knowledge rather than to laymen." Yes, one of my aims with regard to our majors is to encourage them to attain a specialized knowledge that will help them become something more than laypersons. If Ms. Blau thinks that my major aim should be to prepare her for GRE's (or MCATs), she should be demanding more technical education rather than less. But is Ms. Blau referring to "technology", a term she uses later in the letter, in the same

context? TECHNOLOGY: "The science of the application of knowledge to practical purposes." I do not teach technology precisely because I do not regard it as a valid "academic discipline" for an institution like Wesleyan. I do not believe that my colleagues teach technology. But if Ms. Blau thinks that one of our major aims should be to solve societal problems, she should perhaps be clamoring for more technological education rather than less.

If Ms. Blau, as a science major, is still confusing technological approaches to science with experimental research (perhaps under the influence of standard, biased assumptions of some of her colleagues), we have indeed failed somewhere along the line. RESEARCH: "critical and exhaustive investigation or experimentation having for its aim the discovery of new facts and their correct interpretation, the revision of accepted conclusions, theories or laws in the light of newly discovered facts, or the practical applications of such new or revised conclusions, theories or laws." Isn't this approach to knowledge exactly what we should be encouraging at this University, not only in the sciences, but in almost all other departments as well? EXPERIMENT: "An act or operation carried out in order to discover some unknown principle or effect or to test, establish, or illustrate some suggested or known truth." We emphasize an experimental approach to the acquisition of knowledge because in Biology that is the only reasonable way of accomplishing the aims of research. That is true whether we are considering the immediate problems that are of most direct interest to our faculty (and many of our students), or "controversial theories, historical perspectives, and the role biology plays in the world in which we all live." Ms. Blau excludes experimental research as an essential

such as biology, I'm afraid that I cannot conceive of what she might have in mind with regard to the latter term.

Finally, we emphasize experimental approaches in our teaching because we feel that a student who not only possesses the specialized knowledge of biology, but also has an understanding of how that knowledge has been acquired (and who might have participated in acquiring a small part of it), has the best possible chance of making

ConnPIRG, the WSA, and *Hermes* urge all students to complete the Course Critique questionnaires, and return them by December 18 to boxes in Flisk, Olin, Sci Li, Mocon, or North College. Extra copies of the questionnaires may be found in these areas. Contact Thom Kleiner (Box 667, 346-7343) for any information or suggestions.

## Corrections

Professor James T. Gutmann was misquoted in the article "Faculty Consider Unionization" in the November 9 issue of *Hermes*.

His statement should have read: I believe the administration is acting with the best interests of the university, as it perceives them, in mind; and if the local AAUP chapter continues to provide the faculty with a clear voice, I believe the administration will recognize the extent to which the best interests of the university and those of the faculty are very closely allied.

We sincerely regret any inconvenience this error has caused.

Andy Yavelow wrote the second letter to the editor in the last issue. This letter was in response to an article about theater in the issue before. His name was omitted and we regret the error.

We regret not listing the boiler workers in our article on Physical Plant Unionization.

positive use of his or her knowledge, whether the future involves medical service, professional scientific investigation, activities as an informed layperson, or solving problems of society.

Allan Berlid  
Associate Professor  
Biology Department

## Highly cultured.



All natural,  
creamy, full of fruit  
**BREYERS®**  
Real yogurt  
at its best.



# Why A Duck? Why A Car.

By Paul Edwards

I  
The other day I ran into my brother, who's a freshman, on the lawn in front of Judd Hall. He was talking with a friend. She said, "Wouldn't it be great to be able to get out of this joint whenever we wanted to? Let's get a car! We could go to New York. It's only 2 1/2 hours away. We could even go down just for dinner! It would be so nice to pack up and leave this pit for awhile!"

Great, I thought. You're going to buy a car. Car equals freedom, freedom is good, good, good. Car is cheap, car is wherever-you-want, car is close together and warm, car purrs and rocks like Momma's arms. Car is heaven, highway in the sky, take me home, country roads.

And you're going to get out of here. Here is Wesleyan. Wesleyan is work, no social life, no choice of restaurants, no city. Wesleyan is pressure, split personality, no sleep, papers, books, and competition. Wesleyan is not-home, Wesleyan is bad, Wesleyan is ivory tower, isolation, unreality. Yes, yes. Wesleyan life isn't real life, it's insanity, it's prison, it's *wrong*.

II  
These desires and feelings are so common here that I could probably call them universal. Except that I don't feel like that. In fact, I feel the opposite. Want to hear about it? Read on.

To me, car is prison and isolation. Car is not knowing the people on my block because I have to drive across town to see my friends. Car is confinement for endless hours. Car says build work places miles from living places so that I must drive to work. Car says that there is not good enough, there is better.

Car is expensive. The *real* cost of even a small, new car, if you include repairs, equipment, and legal expenses as well as gas, is at least 12 cents a mile. Let's see: that's \$22.92 from New York to Baltimore. Funny...a train ticket is just \$18.50. And you don't have to drive—much less repair, house, and guard—the train.

Car is oppressive. Car implies suburbia. Car means inner-city ghettoes for those who can't afford them, since you must have car to live outside city. Car means millions of acres devoted to asphalt and white lines. Car is the Blue Ridge Parkway, so that even in the wilderness there will be car.

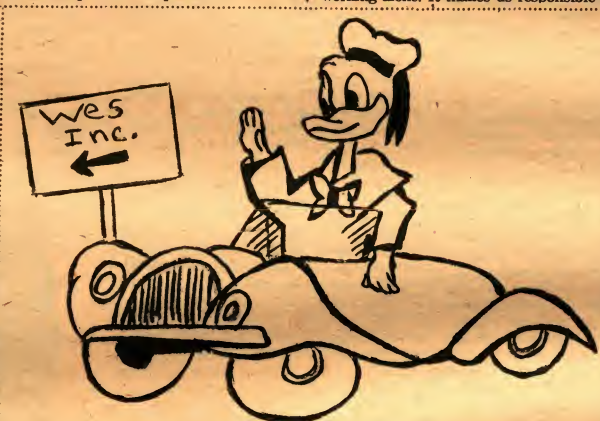
Car is highway murder. Car is AM radio banality. Car is lock yourself into a system controlled by oil companies, professional mechanics, Ford, GM, and Chrysler, planned obsolescence, new, more complicated mechanisms every year that put understanding of the machine you're driving (not to mention real control) farther beyond your reach. Car is billions of gallons of gasoline spewed into the air as carbon monoxide and lead and grit.

Car is an ideology of hatred, domination, exploitation, control. Car is cities with unbreathable air, loud raucous horns, and angry frustrated drivers...

And this goes on and on, literally "driving" us further and further from what is human, loving, natural, and good. Why a duck? Why a car.

III  
About Wesleyan. I'm going to write about it as I think it could—no, would—be if our energies were focused on the right places. Some of this will seem very negative, perhaps hypercritical. But my point throughout is this: the *only* way

Wesleyan can become the kind of ecstatic place I think some of us envision (and even now feel the roots of) is by becoming a real community of real people living real lives. Not a day camp or a home-away-from-home, but *a home of our own*; not a place to get in, get away from, get out of, and get through, but a place to get into, get back to, get involved with, get fulfilled by. That's what Wesleyan means to me *now*. I think it could mean that more fully, and to all of us, if we'd consider redefining our relationship with this place.



The dominant attitude towards Wesleyan, at least among students, is as if the place were a sort of gigantic intellectual restaurant. When you get here, the table is set. You choose each course of your meal from the extensive menu. The house prepares the food; you eat your meal, ignoring the staff of servants and the people at other tables, and when you've done you pay your check and you leave. The waiters clear the table and clean up the mess. You have "had" your intellectual dinner, and you won't need another one, at least until law school.

Well, I think we ought to start doing our own cooking. (Table setting and dishwashing, too.) I want to talk about three areas we might look at changing: competition, alienation, and work.

One of Wes's biggest selling points is its individualistic atmosphere. Anyone can pursue almost anything s/he wants to here, and can pretty much define their own path. I think that's *great*: it's one reason I'm here, and I wouldn't want anything to block that.

But individuality and competition are two entirely different things. Being different from each other doesn't have to mean that we're graded on a curve so that it's good for me if you do badly. It doesn't have to mean that we sit in classrooms, all facing front like soldiers, and have what is essentially a one-sided, two-person "conversation" with a professor, when we're surrounded by intelligent people (known colloquially as "students"). It doesn't have to mean that all of us do our own papers—and, please God, talk not with our neighbors—which are seen only by the professor, graded like I.Q. tests, and returned—for our eyes only, of course.

Instead of this one-on-one, get-what-you-can pattern, why not cooperation? Why not responsibility to other students and to the community as a whole, instead of to the prof and the GPA?

What reason is there that papers—on any subject at all—must be written by one student working alone? Working together, in pairs or in groups, has all the advantages. It's cooperative and communicative. It gives insight, through others, into areas untouched by one working alone. It makes us responsible to

spent twelve hours a day farting and were too embarrassed to tell anyone else.

Pretention is ugly, but I think it comes from the kind of competitive arena in which we do everything (not only at Wesleyan). But intellectually isn't the same thing. It's not wrong or evil or fake—it's what we're all doing here in some form or other, if what it means is learning. Our incredible privilege—the cultural and financial power which allow us to spend four years of our lives doing nothing but thinking, reading, and learning—has become a source of fear, frustration, and alienation. It ought to be a source of joy. We have so much to tell each other, to teach each other—why aren't we talking?

Work. Not what you think I mean. Another source of division and alienation. Hundreds of people have jobs at Wesleyan. To us, they're automata: secretaries, administrators, faculty, physical plant, janitors, and so on, all are just waiters here to serve our every need. What do you know about their lives? What do you think about the drudgery most of them do for a living? Are they different from you, dumber, inhuman? What does "work" mean to you? What will you do for a living when Mom and Dad won't pay your way?

I think all of us should work on and in Wesleyan. This shouldn't be a place we "go", but place we *live*, and that means doing our share. If we're going to eat the food, we've got to set the table and clean up, too. If every student on this campus worked a couple of hours every week, I think we'd feel a lot closer to each other and especially to those "automata" that, now, we can look right through. Cooperate! Share the work and the wealth! WE can help administrate and teach, as well as type letters, rake leaves, and clean toilets. If we'd all work just a little, we could:

—free some of the workers' time. They could join our classes and learn with us. We could learn from each other. This wouldn't have to reduce their salaries—God knows we don't need to be paid.

—shift some of the unfair burden off the shoulders of work-study people. Why should they have to work 8-10 hours a week while the rest of us do nothing?

—involve ourselves in the true Wesleyan-Middletown community, in which we are now alienated and unwilling participants.

IV  
This article is about some things that are wrong. What it's *really* about, though, is caring: the feeling of responsibility that comes from feeling connected to a place and a group of people, connected enough to want to take charge, to change, to grow. The institution doesn't give us the chance? Fine. Let's take it apart and rebuild it. The town is sleepy and dull? Let's infuse it with our blood. If you don't like this place, what I say to you is: stick around. Don't leave. Let's do some things together, and maybe we can make this a happier place to live our (very real) lives. Why a duck? why a car.

## Why No Peace

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to officials of the Palestinian Liberation Organization and other Palestinian representatives in the U.S., was quoted as saying, "I wish they would go away." Also during the month of September a State Department letter (Sept. 11) affirmed that no P.L.O. spokespersons will be allowed to visit the U.S. Palestinians are finding that they are a nationally oppressed group in the U.S. as well as in Palestine.

What the United States government hopes to gain by suppressing the Palestinian point of view in America and in negotiations with other parties involved in the Middle East conflict, can only be a partial solution to the Arab-Israeli dispute. Such an attempted solution is more like a "framework for war" than a "framework for peace," for it tries to ignore the national aspirations of an entire people. To ignore the reality of a National Liberation movement is to commit yourself to the side of the oppressing forces whose unrealistic goal it is to thwart the struggle for national identity and national independence.

The Palestinian people's struggle is now 60 years old and it will go on if necessary, for the next 60 or 600 years, until the people of Palestine again live in their country, in freedom, independence and sovereignty. On October 1, 1978, over 200 West Bank mayors and leaders signed a statement rejecting the Camp David agreements, reaffirming their Palestinian national identity of the people both inside and outside of Palestine, insisting upon the fact that the P.L.O. is the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, calling for a just and lasting peace to be achieved only by the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and national independence, and demanding the return of Arab Jerusalem which is an indivisible part of the West Bank, a historic and spiritual cause that cannot be compromised.

The situation in the Middle East is increasingly volatile and headed ever further from a prospective peace as the controlling powers involved, namely Israel and the U.S., continue to evade the real crisis at hand.

The true security of Israel may not be as threatened by external forces as it is by its own leadership's inability to realistically resolve the Palestine/Israel conflict. As explained by Professor Nasser Aruri, in his article entitled *Middle East-Vietnam Revisited*: "The greatest threat to the Jewish people in Palestine is the one that may arise from within as a result of its leadership's increasing dependence on military means and repression. Not only does Israel hold the world record for the share of military expenditures in the GNP (35.2%) but it is probably the only state whose foreign debt (9 billion dollars in 1976) exceeds the state budget. Militarization, which penetrates the economic, political, and social sectors of Israeli society, has become the focus of National life. It behooves Begin and his ruling circle to address this dimension of insecurity whose remedy will not be found in the pursuit of biblical frontiers or the subjection of another people."



# Critical Views

By Lisa Cunningham  
Mary Kehoe  
Susan Kravitt  
Marlene McDermott  
Wendy Melechen  
Daphne Raz



This article is the result of six women working together. For most of us it is our first attempt at a collective writing process, which is radically different from creating something alone. Every word was subject to approval by the entire group, and therefore the outcome reflects six individual voices and rhythms as well as group concerns. We realize that this has resulted in some awkwardness and repetition, but for that the value of the process and what we gained in closeness and awareness as a group compensates for any stylistic shortcomings.

We are six women from the Women and Political Theory tutorial writing this together to share our experiences with you in an effort to broaden awareness of educational alternatives and to generate interest and participation in courses such as this. For each of us, taking this course has been one of the most exciting and gratifying educational experiences we have had at Wesleyan. Unlike traditional, hierarchical classes, we combine the personal and political with the intellectual and analytical. We see this as an alternative approach. We want to study Women and Political Theory, a topic bound up in every aspect of our lives, in a non-threatening and non-competitive atmosphere. We want to do this as part of a group which will allow us to explore both the theoretical and the personal. Finally, we want to integrate the result of our studies with our everyday lives.

Three semesters ago at Wesleyan, a group of women sought an alternative learning situation in which to pursue their concerns about women in society. They wanted an opportunity to integrate their personal interests with feminist political theories and literature. From their efforts the Women and Political Theory tutorial

## Women and Political Theory

was born. Since then, the course has continued and grown.

This semester there are three student-initiated sections of Women and Political Theory with a total of 18 women. Each section developed its own syllabus which resulted in three different approaches to match the needs of the women in each group. When we talk about the needs that we have as individuals within the course, we aren't talking about amorphous longings but rather about specifics that the group, if it works at being sensitive, is able to meet. For example, we need to learn some feminist theory and to make it relate to our lives in concrete ways. We need to be listened to, to receive support and patience, and to have time for confusion.

Every section meets at least once a week for three hours. Work for the course covers readings, discussions, group and/or individual projects, and keeping a journal to be shared with the group. Three times a semester the sections meet together to share developments from within our groups. We held the first of these meetings last month, beginning with a pot-luck dinner followed by presentations. These included a performance of a poem for four women's voices, a discussion about prostitution, and talks about aspects and issues in the course which have been most fulfilling.

Our sponsor, Joan Hedrick of the English Department, attends these joint meetings to learn with us. She does not lead these meetings or come to our individual classes, but is rather a supportive and interested resource person.

## An Education

Our section's first major effort was developing and organizing our own syllabus using suggestions from the past three semesters. This gave us the opportunity to define our individual positions and to develop our own priorities and directions from within the group. We found that our approach was broad enough to encompass our individual interests and needs.

In our case, the overwhelming interest was to orient the syllabus towards practical application. We sought to find out why so many people feel alienated from the Women's Movement and to work towards understanding and eradicating these attitudes. Therefore, the first section of our syllabus dealt with groups of women not aligned in great numbers with the Women's Movement, among others, black women, prostitutes, lesbian separatists, and working women, including



## Where Have All The

by Anne Hietbrink

Emotions revolve around two things on my hall: me and "work." We are at college to receive an education, but the concept of being educated, of possessing knowledge too ethereal to consider. Our studies are work, any extra activity is squeezed into our schedule through great sacrifice. Acknowledged learning takes place only in classrooms, and will end when we leave school.

Education, that huge realm encompassing all things, the supposed object of our college existence. Why then, Wesleyan students (I doubt they are so atypical), have such a narrow-minded view of the scope of their present occupation. Sure, we have university majors, interdisciplinary programs, and the free university, no traditional academic programs for Wesleyan's open-minded sector. But I am not concerned with academics. I limit one's education to four or five courses, to seek other forms of thought, to reject introspection and share thought with other students as frivolous wastes of time. I am indulged in at the cost of one's educational process. I am indulged in at the cost of one's educational process. I am indulged in at the cost of one's educational process.

I am here, not only to take classes and learn about things like Marxist ideology, but to take that knowledge and be able to see how it works in Ayn Rand or Niko Kazantzakis, Baba Muktananda or my mother's letter. To be always thinking, questioning, trying new things, seeing old things in a new light — that is what education. For a formal education such as college offers is merely starting ground, a bare platform upon which to build an education. Books and classes only form a framework; it is up to the student to use those tools as a catalyst to move further in the quest for knowledge.

There is a tremendous emphasis on the "work" here, a guess that is what going to a "good" school is all about. I am a person takes time to catch up with his self, to learn who

## Life in a Military School

By Ted Brown

Though most Wesleyan students might be shocked at the revelation, military preparatory schools do exist. This type of education has its proponents and opponents, and after attending such a school for eight years, I must definitely place myself on the side of the opponents.

While my school, Linsly Military Institute in Wheeling, West Virginia, does not even begin to compare to well known schools of higher military education (such as West Point and The Citadel), there is quite definitely the authoritarian, totalitarian type of thinking that ultimately becomes detrimental to a democratic society.

I recall starting at Linsly as a 10-year-old 5th grader. (My parents are not pro-military for sending me to such a school, it is just that the local public schools were academically inferior.) As a day student, I was rather upset that some of my classmates were boarding students. It seemed cruel for parents to send a little kid away from home during his formative years. The fate of the other students didn't bother me as much as the regimentation did.

From the beginning, I had to wear a uniform consisting of a gray shirt, black tie, gray trousers with a black stripe down the side, and black oxford shoes that had to be kept well-polished. Hair must be worn above the ears, and sideburns couldn't grow below the middle of the ear. While all this standardization might save on parents' clothing bills, it does little to encourage the free expression that a wide variety of outfits usually provides.

If the uniform wasn't bad enough, the marching was terrible. Twice a week (since I left this spring, it's become thrice a week), all the students form into military companies, platoons, and squads, and learn how to march. Hut-2-3-4, column right march... We started out in Grade 5 with wooden rifles; by 9th grade we got fully operable M-16's. We had to learn the manual of arms. Right shoulder arms, port arms, inspection arms... Dexterity with a rifle was well regarded, and membership on the rifle-twirling drill team was coveted.

In addition to marching with rifles, we were also expected to fire them! I personally find guns repugnant and feel that they should be banned, and thus I could see no compelling reason to shoot one. So I told the army sergeant in residence that I wouldn't shoot because it was a violation of my Constitutional rights. He was incredulous: perhaps he had never heard of the Bill of Rights. If a person has a right to keep and bear arms, s/he also has the right not to keep and not to bear arms.

I was generally considered the campus radical. Of course, left-wing positions in West Virginia are not even given a second thought in Connecticut. The school newspaper, aptly called *The Cadet*, was meant to express the party line; that is, the school's administration had veto power over all material. Thus, my editorials in favor of amnesty for draft dodgers, against the draft, and against the neutron bomb were not well regarded by the headmaster and others. However, since these positions did not particularly affect the school, they were, amazingly enough, allowed to be published.

On the other hand, I wrote an editorial exposing a widespread cheating scandal at the school that was not published. Among other things, it included evidence that coaches were ignoring cheating by star athletes in their classes. The headmaster vetoed the editorial, saying that it would do "fatal damage to the school by airing our dirty linen before the public." This was rather upsetting, of course. I found that we weren't censored as much as other private schools, perhaps because we were aware of the "boundaries" and didn't even attempt to violate them.

Not only was the school administration not particularly concerned with freedom of speech, but neither were some students. The school had created a student council to "represent" the views of the students, but in actuality, it was only a sham to make us seem like a democratic society. The official name of the body was the Student Military and Civilian Command Alliance (SMACCA), and its ex officio head was the Cadet Major, the number one student military leader. At one of the meetings of SMACCA, a member stated that Linsly cadets had no rights once they come through the front door. I responded that the Constitution stretched from Maine to California, inside each and every building and room. That was obviously not the majority view.

After I graduated, I found that the headmaster was now asking parents to sign a form waiving their kids' rights once they enter the school. It was a relief to know that most parents would not sign the form, and thus it was dropped.



Before: Cadet Captain Brown



After: Wesleyan Student Ted Brown



## Personal Alternative



homemakers. Second, we studied feminist theory of women in capitalism and looked at the notion of androgyny (the end of polarization of the sexes). We read de Beauvoir, Millet, Dworkin, and other authors. Presently we are immersed in the last section of the course, which comprises a study of alternative ways of living that might provide a more desirable existence for women, including socialism, radical feminism, and anarchism.

Along with readings and discussions, we have done some special projects this semester. We talked to Wesleyan women in an effort to find out how they feel about the Women's Center; we shared our perceptions of our mothers and grandmothers; we critically examined ways in which we and others oppress women. In support of the secretaries' strike, we held class at the vigil and posted a poem about secretaries by Marge Piercy around campus. We

attended the film 'Rape Culture', and followed it up with a class and discussion. In our class, we created a fairy tale about society as we wished it could be. We had a sleepover which served both as a class and as a way to get to know one another better, and finally we sponsored the two movies about women, 'Ain't Nobody's Business' and 'Like a Rose'.

As we become more accustomed to working together, we are increasingly conscious of group and individual needs, rather than being preoccupied with fulfilling only our own needs, as we are taught in traditional classes. We have found that we are not hindered by differences of personality or opinion, instead we are discovering how our concerns as individuals both compliment and provide for the needs of the group. As a group we explore ideas that we couldn't individually; our group has the potential to be — and often is — more than the sum of its parts.

As a result of our collective structure, we have to put more work and energy into every meeting because no one is coming to us with a prepared lecture. We must each do all the reading, for the success of the class depends upon everyone being prepared. It is a powerful feeling to realize that we actually are the class and it cannot move without each of us. This responsibility is also an incredible freedom. It is freedom to find out how we feel about our structure and the ability to change it as we

see fit. We have the room to be creative, to make up stories and think up projects, knowing that our input is not only welcome but vital. Since we create the experience, since we work through every idea, our conclusions and questions are especially meaningful to us. We have found that learning to take an active part in our education in this course also gives us the experience and strength to be more in control of the rest of our education.

In addition, the unique structure of *Women and Political Theory* generates changes in our perceptions which will stay with us for the rest of our lives. The presence of an authority figure stimulates competition for approval and "right answers". Our teacher-less structure avoids these effects and has allowed us to build up a level of trust within the group that is seldom if ever found in traditionally structured classes. Because of its structure, this course has related more than any other to our lives. We can live what we learn, and in our case the course has helped us to live our feminism. The added responsibility has also taught us how to learn outside of the school structure, enabling us to keep learning after we leave school. For the rest of our lives we will not be passive creatures — we will be more able to work with others, to listen to other views, to think through ideas and to continue to learn.

If you are interested in learning more about *Women and Political Theory* or would like to set up a section for next semester, contact Wendy Melechen, Box 901, 347-3982.



## Questions Gone?

is going on inside during this infusion of knowledge, he is wasting time as common attitudes would have it. What good is this great education if one does not take time to make it a part of oneself, to sort out the good from the bad, the opinions from the facts, and let it settle into place? How can one study textbook psychology without making insights into one's own psyche, or government without wondering if corporate capitalism has taken over everything in our lives, including government; or chemistry without wondering if there is, after all, an order in the cosmos. Whatever the topic, there is some personal connection to be made, or the class would not have attracted you in the first place. It is the personal application of knowledge to the inner questions, filling in the gaps, expanding and manipulating the old answers, and most importantly, the formation of new questions that there is not time for. Isn't this the "raison d'être" of education? Learning does not mean anything when one is only ingesting facts and figures, spewing them upon a sheet of paper for the approval of another human, forgetting them the next moment. When does the satisfaction of using those learned facts to defend your own position or ask a new question hold more value than a written symbol coming from the registrar? Grades do not measure an education, they only record your ability to communicate someone else's thoughts.

Education, you say... just a word! Perhaps; but like any word in any language, the arrangement of letters that spell education have a symbolic meaning. My qualm lies in the fact that education in a total sense, in the meaning that transcends the symbol, does not take place here at Wesleyan or probably anywhere else for that matter. With the high pressures to do well, students neglect the valuable process of learning, of assimilating all the facts and figures, the questions and answers, into usable, livable philosophies of thought. Too much time is spent answering, too little time formulating the questions.

demerit system known as Punishment Duty (PD). PD can be awarded for such nifty offenses as Failure to Salute, Failing Inspection, Dropping a Rifle, and "Conduct Unbecoming a Linsly Cadet" — a far reaching offense that consists of anything the school wants it to consist of. If a cadet receives more than two PD hours a semester, he has to march the excess after school, carrying a rifle on his shoulder. Although this system has been found to be ineffective, the ever conservative Board of Trustees has not tried to find something else.

At Linsly, Juniors and Seniors hold military ranks that permit them to command younger cadets. Military rank is determined by a point system, wherein one's grade point average, military leadership points, and very importantly, extracurricular activities are tallied. Sophomores and Juniors attempt to do every activity possible to achieve the highest possible rank. My junior year I was tenth in class military ranking, my Senior year I was fourth and had the title of Cadet Captain—Commander of the Lower School. I was to insure that all the fifth through eighth graders acquired the assigned military skills.

You might say that I didn't do a particularly good job at relaying military information, since I obviously didn't have my heart in it. While most of my classmates went power-mad, demanding to be addressed as "Captain this" and "Lieutenant that", I was generally a good guy whom the little kids called by my first name. The military leadership did not particularly appreciate my attitude, but the very structured system would have made it difficult to remove me even if they had tried.

Graduation Day was the last day I shaved, and since then I've only had one haircut. The color gray makes me ill, and you wouldn't catch me dead in it after eight years of those damn uniforms. When I visited the school this summer to receive my transcripts, a teacher who heard my voice from the next room said, "I bet Brown has a beard." They certainly knew what to expect from this anti-military military student.

By Denise Giacomozzi

Assignment: Think about the times you have done some first-hand thinking, learning or discovering.

The times of such first-hand thinking have not been over abundant. A semester spent in another country without a strong command of the language was one of the exceptional times for me. To begin: when family, friends and culture are removed the only thing left is you. What is important in your life is what you will make an effort to sustain. Decisions are made as to how much you value time alone and how flexible you will be. You find out what defines you. The family you are living with cannot pronounce "Denise" so every day for the first week they ask you: "What's your name?" You learn deal with being thought unintelligent and simple because you need to have everything repeated for you and you do things such as cut your fruit the wrong way and put your hands on your lap at dinner instead of on the table.

There is a redefinition of yourself from a private to a public person, and you get used to answering questions about why you wear those kind of shoes and why your ears are not pierced. Something happens as you realize that since you are a woman you exist to be grabbed, followed and the object of "piropas." "Piropas" are part of the Spanish tradition of comments made by men to women. They are given and received as compliments — by the Spanish that is. The time soon comes when you tire of strange men sticking their faces in yours, looking you up, down and around and then giving the evaluation: "guapa (good-looking)."

Watching the civil guard on street corners with machine guns, you see how fragile democracy is.

Fragility is a good word. After eight dream-like hours on a jet plane, years of education become invalid. You have forgotten the word for suitcase and the cab driver has given you the wrong one. The little girl next door cannot understand your ability to get her grade-school dirty jokes because all the punch lines contain words that are not found in Spanish-English dictionaries. You cannot understand half of what the three year old granddaughter is saying and you have studied Spanish in all the best schools longer than she's been alive.

What is important is knowing that you can be alone with yourself and that you don't always need to be with others who are frantic with seeing and doing everything. Also it is important to know when you have been alone enough that is right to compromise. It is important to know for sure that you are not a city person and for all the parks and plazas nothing takes the place of being in the country. And for all the museums and cathedrals and SIGHTS TO SEE nothing takes the place of picking pomegranates, hiking in the mountains, lying in wheat fields under blue, blue skies talking and not talking with a friend.

Part of first-hand learning has to go with being pushed to your limits. If you really want to express yourself you can talk to Maria about hopes and dreams and what the hell if every now and then you say "men" when you meant "shoulders" and you forget a few past participles.

My senora and I had a fight. She would never let me help with the dishes or make my bed — "You've paid," she would say. One day I grabbed my pillow from her and yelled something about how I don't want other people doing things like making my bed for me. I really yelled.

She was so surprised and so was I, that we both just started laughing. After that, I was allowed to help set the table.

In Spain everyone sings a lot. Men and women. In the middle of the street and alone. One day, Juan, the senior of the house, said to me, "Whenever you want, you can sing." It was one of the nicest things anyone has ever said to me.

When I dance, I am alone. There is just me and my body. Mostly, I just wear a black leotard. There is no distraction. In the restriction of the dance, that is, in the steps, there is freedom to act purposefully. Sometimes the dance is society and then I am doing what is acceptable. Even so, I am not stifled because I recognize that there are decisions to be made within the dance as to how my whole body will respond with the steps. When I switch roles and dance the male part to certain dances, I feel resistance often from my partner. I wonder: do men ever feel that from me? I also wonder: How can they bear to be so pushy? and Do they always enjoy being the initiator?

When I do unstructured dance at first I am exhilarated and feel the joy of lack of restraint. But after a short while I know I am being less creative. I think I use restraints well and am challenged by them to find and maintain my individuality. This could all mean that I will work well in society, realizing my options and using them. There is all kinds of room for spirit in the most structured things.

Why use a door when you can go out the window?

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## One

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# On Spain, Dance

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body. Most distraction. steps, there dance is so. Even so, I a decisions to body will re dance the

The school's atmosphere caused it to develop monolithically right-wing political membership in the National Rifle Association and a very few sympathizers with Hitler's drill team voted unanimously to file his

to students to learn what they want. While the Chinese have always had a strong sense of duty, the Chinese Party, the one fighting as hard as we to get the Chinese to learn what they want, is not doing it. The high pressures to do a valuable process of learning and figures, the questionnaires, the thought philosophies of the thought, too little time

well, students neglect the fact that 5% of assimilating all the facts and answers, into usable, livable information, takes time. Too much time is spent, in the process, of multiplying the questions. ■

on, and you get used to answering questions like "How do you wear these kind of shoes and why you eat like this?" or "What do you do for a living?"

Something happens as you realize that you are a woman you exist to be grabbed, followed, groped, and propositioned. "Propops are part of the environment of men." Proposals are made by men to women in addition to comments as compliments — by the way, it is. The time soon comes when you are stuck, sticking their faces in yours, looking you up and down, and then giving the evaluation: "gungah!"

As the civil guard on street corners with their guns, you see how fragile democracy is.

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# The Case For A Women's History Professor

by Lauren Goldfarb

The search is on in the History Department for a professor of American social history. Judd Kahn, who formerly taught courses in this area, is on leave and not expected to return. Some students on the search committee have suggested a woman be hired whose specialty is women's history, according to Frances Sheehan, a member of that committee. Richard Buel, chairman of the History Department, feels the presence of such a specialist would be "redundant" as there are several members of the department who deal with women's history in their courses. Before elaborating on this, it is important to delineate the argument that there is, in fact, a history of women as distinct from that of men. The following is a synopsis of a speech delivered by the eminent historian Carl Degler at Oxford University of 1975 entitled "Is There a History of Women?"

Women have always been portrayed as on the periphery of history, as wives, mothers and daughters — appendages to men. Where they appear as monarchs or generals or writers, says Degler, they are made to appear like men and judged by male standards. One woman historian has suggested that this is because historians, up until the present, have always been men. A male historian has retorted that men were the sources of power and social change in the past. Degler says that this is because history has been traditionally concerned with areas in which men have predominated: wars, diplomacy, statecraft and business. But the content of history has broadened to include areas where women have been predominant: the working force, the family, reform movements and education, i.e., social history.

The problem, says Degler, is that history has assumed that men and women are alike, have the same concerns and that the history of women can be "subsumed" under the history of men. But the fact is that "women are no more like men socially than physiologically" and as such, they affect and are affected by history differently.

The first example brought up by Degler is Turner's thesis of the frontier. According to Turner, the existence of the open frontier made men into pioneering individualists whose freedom and opportunities became limited with urbanization. For women, says Degler, the process was reversed. In the West, women were isolated from one another in their living situations and restricted to certain jobs necessary to assist men in their endeavors. Once in the city, women had greater opportunities. They became the primary initiators of divorces. Family size dropped. Women got together to form social organizations once free of the drudgery of child care and house maintenance.



History of women in wartime also is different from that of men. From a man's point of view, women nursed the wounded and welcomed home the survivors. In reality, war expanded the number of occupations open to women. It was no accident that women received the vote after W.W. I, according to Degler. Their new jobs afforded them new social positions which led to new demands.

Degler also asserts that social changes that improve the position of men can act in ways to restrict women's opportunities. The example he gives is the early period of the labor movement which excluded and was hostile to women. These are examples of how history affected women differently than men. Such effects won't be examined unless the history of women is seen as

different from that of men.

Conversely, the fact that women have different positions than men in society — as wives and mothers — has affected the course of history. Because of the way drunkenness disrupted the home, for example, women became the prime movers behind the Prohibition movement. According to Degler, the "standard historical explanation emphasizes men's interests," worries about immigrants who were threatening old social patterns, and fears of loss of social status or conflicts between urban and rural America.

Their role in the home predisposed women to certain attitudes about war as well. Degler credits the passage of the Kellogg-Briand Pact in 1929 to women because of its clause that the U.S. renounce force as a method of settling international disputes.

Women's role also predisposed them to oppose slavery. "The sexual exploitation of black women by Southern men gave Southern women a reason for believing that slavery was wrong." Because of this solidarity or because of jealousy, women were prime movers in the Abolition fight. However, some women insisted that their equality not be subordinated to that of blacks, as men desired. This difference in priorities split the women's suffrage movement.

Degler believes that women are not just another minority and their history should not be treated as though they were. He points out that women, in some places, make up more than half the population; and he asserts that unlike any other minority, women are divided by class. In the suffrage movement, as well as in the feminist movement of today, middle class women are not united with working class women. Women are further divided by their intimate interest in the other sex. "Unlike any other minority, women have created organizations to oppose other women in achieving equality with their oppressors." These women see equality as a threat to the home, the primary obligation of women.

Finally, women are unlike any other minority because they are a sex. Degler describes a very painful and socially offensive disease which resulted

uniquely from childbirth. Also, the life expectancy of the average woman has changed, throughout history, at different rates and at different times, than that of the average man. The size of families dropped even before the industrial revolution — 30% between 1800 and 1900. This reflects a heretofore unexamined concern of women to be free from the bondage of large families.

There is a whole history of abortion yet to be written, says Degler. Even though efforts at family planning should have failed because of the era's false belief that the infertile period was halfway between menstrual periods, family size shrank. Testimony of doctors attest that women were having abortions, performing them themselves and not feeling anything wrong with it, to the chagrin of their physicians.

Women's sex defines their separate history in two additional ways: First, women can be victims of rape. Second, women can have children without feeling sexual arousal; unlike men, who orgasm when impregnating. This, says Degler, leaves women's sexuality to be "emphasized, ignored or denied without any danger to society's primary interest in offspring." Times when women's sexuality was emphasized included periods when the belief in the myth of Venus, Eve as temptress and witches as evil was strong. Women's sexuality was denied during Victorian times whereas during the Middle Ages and the early modern period, "women were viewed as sexually insatiable."

The search committee does not contest the fact that there is a separate history of women and that it has been sadly ignored by historians in the past. According to Chairperson Buel, one member of the department does specialize in women's history; Donald Meyer. Meyer does research and writing on women's history and will be presenting a paper to the American Historical Association in December comparing the development of feminine roles in Italy, Sweden and the United States. Meyer, says Buel, is "widely recognized as an authority" in this area.

In addition, Vera Schwartz addresses attention to the role of women in revolutionary China. Louisa Hoberman touches on women in her courses on the third world and Latin America. And Richard Vann taught a course on the history of the family. Plus, according to Buel, "the department's intention in defining the slot (for the new position) was to include women under the rubric of the social history of the cities." And the rest of the department, while not doing active research and publishing in the field, "is cognizant of the need to present the other half of the story."

Richard Vann "hopes very much that we get a women's historian." He feels he can only teach his history of the family course every other year and that the absence of Sheila Tobias has left a void in the field of women's studies. Vann, who feels that there should be a women's studies major established, thinks a woman should play a leading role in its establishment. Vann feels that if a labor historian or an urban historian is the best candidate, then he or she should be picked. But if it is an equal choice between one of these and a women's historian, the latter should be picked.

When asked if a women's historian should be picked because there are only two women in the department, Buel replied that "that takes place under affirmative action anyway." There is an active soliciting of women and minorities and if the credentials are "exactly the same" the woman will be chosen over the man.

While it seems that women's history is given consideration at Wesleyan, the question remains, is it enough? Only the faculty, majors and those desiring a women's studies department can answer that. Whether the chosen applicant is a woman or not, it can be assumed that the individual will not neglect the role of women in his or her courses. According to Buel, "the phenomenon of women in urban life is considered to be central to the American experience."

## Solar House

Continued from p. 1

market interest rate. For the installation of solar equipment, a separate but similar \$100 million dollar fund will be set up.

As for State legislation, twenty three states, as of May 1977, have passed solar tax incentive bills which include permitting owners to deduct a percentage of solar system expenses from their personal state income tax, exempting merchants of solar apparatus from sales taxes on their receipts, and exempting a buildings proprietor from increased property taxes due to the heightened market value of addition of a solar system. Some states have eased zoning regulations and passed laws to protect the solar system user's access to sunlight and others have allotted funds for research and development of solar energy. In particular, Connecticut passed a law in 1976 which, according to a pamphlet circulated by the National Solar Heating and Cooling Information Center, "authorizes local taxing authorities to exempt property with solar system from increased assessment due to system." In addition, to a similar law, Massachusetts is authorizing credit institutions to make loans with prolonged payback periods and higher maximum amounts for funding solar systems.

Solar energy, through such legislation, is becoming a more cost-efficient and viable answer to the country's energy needs. Under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the National Solar Heating and Cooling Information Center, since the fall of '77, has begun compiling a data bank of names of organizations and individuals involved in construction, funding, and distributing solar equipment; lists of

scheduled workshops, seminars, the conferences by educational institutions or other organizations on solar energy; federal and state legislation enacted; and domestic and commercial solar projects.

In "Field Work in Resource Planning," CSIS courses 411, 412 & 413, the students have learned that two types of barriers to solar home construction exist — social and economic. The two main social impediments include individual concern for the aesthetic appearance of the building and a transition to a decentralized energy source producing a self-sufficiency which conflicts with our present dependence on centralized technology due to the American public's resistance to understanding it. Another detriment is that there aren't enough solar homes to walk into and feel warm in. The economic barrier may be as much as a \$10,000 increased investment in a home due to solar equipment costs. But with fossil fuel costs rising at the rate of at least 10 percent per year and with the tax incentives already mentioned and more to come, there should no longer be a financial barrier.

Wesleyan's solar project and many like it will prove that a solar home can be just as appealing to the eye as any conventional home. Although one is limited by the number of windows, positioning of the roof, compartmentalization of the interior to avoid air blockage, position of exits and other minor aspects there is still room for individuality of design — which does not have to be radical as some people believe.

The solar system itself can vary in form and mode of operation. One can install a space heating system or a water heating system or both. Either

water or air can be used as the medium of heat transfer through a duct system. A solar system may be active or passive. An active system includes a fan system to push the flow of medium in the needed direction to heat or cool the system. This "damper" system can be either a manual or automatic heat control regulation system.



The Solar House

The Blackford uses an air duct system in conjunction with dual temperature heat storage, a new idea developed in the class, to increase efficiency. Air circulated below the solar collectors is heated and sent through two rock heat storage bins — each filled with 70 tons of gravel. The system permits the air to enter either the low temperature storage or high temperature storage, relative to temperature recordings in designated areas of the system. A digital electronic heat control system regulating collectors, ducts, dual heat storage areas, the house's interior, and the greenhouse will be installed next spring if enough money is raised by them to cover costs.

Continued on p. 7



# Shooting Off The Canon! ! !

by JOHN RECCHIUTI  
GEORGE APOSOROS  
PETER DAVIS

The following article is the result of much investigation. The compiling of this report was not easy. Our efforts were obstructed at every step because of the nature of the subject matter. The group that we seek to expose is secret; secrecy means that its members won't talk freely; secrecy means that you get answers to your questions like: "I can't talk about that," and "No comment." Secrecy means that insinuation, suspicion, and resistance grow stronger as you ask more questions.

## The Exposure

There is a group of students at Wesleyan which meets regularly with an administrator and a faculty member to discuss the vital problems and needs of Wesleyan life. It is not a group which can be found in the university's Blue Book or in the Student Handbook. It is not even a group which you can find out much about by asking questions because this group meets in secret; the names of its members have never been published; and the ideas which it generates are kept secret. The name of this group is Canon.

Canon's membership is comprised of students from various sections of the community and includes (by invitation of the members) Dean Edward Shanahan and a faculty member, William Spurrier. The members of the group, as best as has been established, are listed.

Members	Some other organizations with which the members are associated
Cathy Albright	CEA
Susan Bodnar	WSA, Alpha Delta Phi
Jim Brenner	Student Trustee
Kevin Bristow	SJB Delta Kappa Epsilon
Ray Escalera	SJB
Irwin Gelman	Havurah, Aikido
Virginia Grey	former EPC member
(chairperson)	
Darlyn Johnson	Head Resident Nicholson
Tom Land	WSA, Psi U.
Marty Saggese	former Argus reporter
Alan Saly	Hermes editor
Roger Theodoreis	RA, Investments task force
Maureen Walsh	RA

There is no consensus among the members of the group as to its purpose other than that they discuss social problems at Wesleyan. One member stated that Canon was an elite group of students that meets in closed session to discuss the Wesleyan community. Another member likened it to a CR group in that it discusses "the personal problems of its members."

The topics of discussion vary widely. The group's emphasis is on the social life at Wesleyan, and several members denied that it had any political overtones. Some of the members, however, disclosed that



discussions have included such topics as the Rumberger memo to Physical Plant supervisors (as reported in the Argus), the Boycott of Downey House by the Student Strike Support Committee, and the reasons for student animosity toward the administration.

Dean Shanahan was reached for comment. He was asked whether he thought it was appropriate that the group discuss political issues. He responded that he felt it appropriate "for the group to consider whatever it wants to discuss." And, although at least one member claimed that a major topic of discussion on September 18th was the effect of the strike on student administration relations, Shanahan said that the strike was discussed "very briefly." When asked whether other members of the administration knew of . par-

ticipation in the group Shanahan explained that Campbell, Beckham, and possibly others knew of his involvement. He specified that they knew only of his involvement and not what transpired at the meetings. Shanahan also said that the group was not an action oriented group and that the only two actions which can be attributed to the group were providing doughnuts and coffee during exams last year, and an attempt at a Christmas party on Foss Hill which was rained out.

While direct connections between Canon and specific actions are unclear beyond this, the point remains that prestigious members of various student groups discuss in private the problems of the Wesleyan community. Discussions with some of the group's members have shown that they view themselves as part of an elite few, and membership on the group is viewed as something of an honor. This is attributable to the fact that they share a rare privilege: direct, regular, private access to the Dean of Students. What exactly is accomplished by this access remains shrouded in the secrecy of Canon.

## A Note on the History of Canon

The history of the group is difficult to establish. We asked Colin Campbell about its history. He said, "I'm not the person to talk to about Canon's history. You might ask Bill Spurrier, he can probably tell you more than I could." So Mr. Spurrier was asked. He said: "I don't feel I can talk about it." So we asked various student members and they said they didn't know much about it.

Dean Shanahan spoke about Canon's history. He said that the group now called Canon was established about four years ago. And that at that time the Committee on Campus Quality evolved into Canon. Canon was established in 1922. The written history of the group is available until 1938, although it seems that it was not until the 1960's that the organization died out. Canon had a charter and bylaws, and its members took an oath of secrecy. Canon's members do not take an oath of secrecy nor does the group have any written by-laws. At the end of each year graduating members pick their own successors. One member of Canon said that the older organization, Cannon, seemed to be the same in spirit as the existing group. Dean Shanahan believes that the links between Canon & Cannon are "as tenuous a connection as you can get."

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At present, a grant is being sought to cover the cost of a control system to be designed and made by Prof. Trousdale, and to pay for the gravel and hot water heating equipment. Because the house is experimental, costs estimates turned out to be off by \$17,000 due to waste of materials from trial and error, inflation in prices, and not figuring the sales tax. Vivien, Frank, and their two children, Lauren and Evan, all seem optimistic about eventually obtaining these funds.

If one ever makes a trip down that country back-road to the solar house, which is set amidst the shade of several trees with a brook trickling behind, one can't help but sense the vigor and cooperation of the students. There is contentment and enthusiasm whether hammering 2 by 4 studs into the framework, stapling up wads of in-

sulation, or washing and loading the gravel into the storage bins. But the group has come a long way since May. Organization of the class was non-hierarchical with Bill acting "as a sort of technical advisor to the whole thing." Conflicts developed, cliques formed, several women felt there was sexism in the attitudes of their male co-workers (although the women did everything the men did), and the pressure of meeting the impossible September 1st deadline added to the stress and strain of a 50 hour work week this summer. Efficiency slackened at times because of these. But the responsibility had to be met. This was a real world commitment, unlike the hypotheses and what-ifs one deals with in the classroom. The group was forced to pull itself together in the face of its frustrations. Interpersonal

relationships had to be settled so that a goal could be reached. In essence, to those students and volunteers working on the Wesleyan solar energy project, it represents learning to build a house, contributing to solar knowledge, fulfilling a family's dream of a house of their own, dealing with others effectively, and in one student's words "learning how to learn."

After the house is completed in January, it will be used as a demonstration center for energy conservation techniques. Demonstrations will be held every fourth weekend and geared for the benefit of four groups: "the lay public; members of the construction trades; professionals in solar technology; and politicians, planning and zoning commission members, building inspectors, and other people whose decisions will affect the energy efficiency of residential housing in New England."

Judging from the enthusiasm and endurance of the class members and the volunteers, and the recent publicity, this project is one accomplishment neither they nor Wesleyan will forget. To the Blackfords it will mean a continuing tie to Wesleyan and a small contribution to making life better. As Jim Friedlich, who graduated last year and has volunteered to complete the project this fall, stated "If I had to give it a name, I'd call it 'Introduction to the Real World.'"



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# Editorials

## Deschooling the School

In this issue, *Hermes* airs various views critical of the Wesleyan education. One view which needs addressing is that Wesleyan teaches competition as opposed to cooperation. Rather than work together to find an answer to a test question, each student is encouraged to go off to his or her own corner and struggle with the problem alone. Whether this is a function of human nature or of the capitalist system, the problem is that some students see this as the only way and jealously guard their own work.

One reason for this attitude is that students are conditioned to working for grades. Here, it seems each teacher grades by a different philosophy. One might hand out C's to get us to work harder or because s/he is judging us relative to his or her expertise. Another might consider an A the pinnacle of excellence and only rarely assign it. Still a third might give A's indiscriminately because s/he doesn't take the process seriously. The most objectionable, however, is the professor who grades on the bell curve; the worse our fellow students do, the better for us.

Even if the grade is a fair evaluation of our work, it does nothing to further our knowledge of the material as would comments. But professors are often too general in their comments or they nitpick. Sometimes comments are illegible and all too often they are non-existent. Yet, most important are the grades; because they, along with equally competitive tests, get us into the graduate school of our choice over our peers.

Another structural assurance of competition is the question and answer format in which students attempt to curry favor with the professor by virtue of "the right answer." It is always apparent who has done the reading. They sit in the front row and pop their hands into the air before the professor has finished formulating his or her question. For those who are not so aggressive, the whole experience can become quite a turn-off. After awhile, when it is

apparent that the class can go on without us, we may stop going to class, stop doing the reading and end up putting in a last minute, half-hearted effort on the final.

One other point: with the teacher as final arbiter, our responses in class or on tests tend to be mere regurgitations of what the teacher or the text has said. We don't dare trust the veracity of our own opinions; the stakes are too high.

There are alternatives which are being practiced by some professors as well as by students forming their own courses. The most successful seminar is one in which the students do most of the talking. We really know we've made it when we begin directing our comments at fellow students and not just at the professor and when we begin to take notes on comments made by our peers.

Another method of cooperative learning is where each student does a different reading and reports on it in class. In this way, we know we are an important part of the learning experience; the class depends on us. Everyone must work together to assure the work is relevant, that it is understood by all and that each opinion is heard. Other mechanisms are group papers and projects.

The implications of competitive learning extend further than this university. Competition exists in the workplace, in the home and in the community, all to the detriment of productive relationships and results. But we can attempt to check this trait in ourselves here and now. Seeking out courses in the catalogue, asking about established student-run tutorials and even forming our own courses - all based on cooperative learning methods - are ways to begin. Best of all, we can talk to our fellow students in a class and to the professor and say, "We want to learn about this, but we want some input into how we learn." Only until after we challenge how we learn, will we be free to question what we learn.